

## Marquess, Scott

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**From:** Darrel Plummer <DPlummer@kdheks.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 09, 2014 10:36 AM  
**To:** Marquess, Scott; Brune, Doug  
**Cc:** Huffman, Diane  
**Subject:** Pretty Prairie KS2015501 upset customer - nitrate complaint

FYI

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**From:** Dianne C. Sands  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 09, 2014 10:33 AM  
**To:** Darrel Plummer  
**Cc:** PWS Image Now Mailbox  
**Subject:** Pretty Prairie KS2015501 upset customer - nitrate complaint  
**Importance:** High

Don't know if you want to send word or not to Doug Brune that a phone call is coming his way.

This morning I received a call from Kimberly Detter, a customer of Pretty Prairie water system. She is upset that the nitrate levels in the water have now reached 20 mg/L and "no one is doing nothing about it."

One of her first calls was to EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline. They told her it was all in the hands of the state and instructed her to call KDHE.

She is very upset and concerned. I gave her the number of Doug Brune at EPA Region 7 to see if EPA has any enforcement actions pending on Pretty Prairie. I explained to her that the Region 7 office is going to be familiar with the Pretty Prairie situation, where the national hotline person probably was not. I also gave her some other information to try and help her understand why Pretty Prairie is providing bottled water for pregnant women, nursing mothers, and babies < 6 months, but not to everyone (blue baby syndrome).

Here are some statements I made:

- She asked at what level of nitrate in the water does it become unsafe for people > 6 months to drink? I talked about the inability of infants to process nitrate, but > 6 months does not have this health concern with nitrate in the water. During this part of the conversation I suggested she visit CDC website to get information on what levels of total nitrate ingested (water, food, etc) would be unsafe.
- She asked why is Pretty Prairie being allowed to serve this unsafe drinking water for so long, and the levels are going up and up and now it's 2x the amount of the MCL. I talked with her a little bit about how a system's water quality can change over time, how regulations go through changes (from RAA to single sample violations), options of treating water with high nitrate is very costly (just as Pretty Prairie has stated) and includes things like installation of new treatment technology, finding a new source of water, etc.
- She asked who else in the state is serving water exceeding nitrate levels of 10 mg/L and especially as high as 20 mg/L? We talked about the fact that while water systems are working on remedying nitrate levels they normally do continue to serve water over 10 mg/L and are normally required to provide bottled water for pregnant women, nursing mothers, and babies < 6 months. We also talked about the nitrate level for community water systems is 10 mg/L, and for non-community water systems is 20 mg/L.

It was a very long phone call with a very upset, concerned person, but I believe this summarizes the information I provided her.

Thank You,

Dianne Sands  
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